

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TAIPEI 02125 072108Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 HA-05 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 /071 W  
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R 071038Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7003  
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USLO PEKING  
AMEMBASSY TOKDHO  
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 02125

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O.11652: GDS  
TAGS : SHUM, PINT, TW  
SUBJECT : FURTHER REPORT ON PRESBYTERIAN/GROC RELATIONS

REF: TAIPEI 2037

1. GROC/KMT HAVE FAILED TO BLOCK THE RE-ELECTION OF SECRETARY GENERAL KAO AND THE CHURCH'S REAFFIRMATION OF ITS DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT MANY IN THE CHURCH EXPECT THAT THE GOVERNMENT (INCLUDING THE PARTY) WILL CONTINUE ITS ATTEMPTS TO SOW DIVISION WITHIN THE CHURCH AND TO PRESSURE ITS MEMBERSHIP TO STEP BACK FROM ITS INCREASING INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS. THIS IS THE OPINION OF THREE AMERICAN OBSERVERS (DR. NEWTON THURBER, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY FDR ASIA, UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA; DR. INSIK KIN, STAFF ASSOCIATE FOR ASIAN AND THE PACIFIC, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA; AND REVEREND PAUL R. GREGORY, UNITED CHURCH BOARD FOR WORLD MINISTRIES) WHO MET WITH EMBASSY OFFICER APRIL 5  
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PAGE 02 TAIPEI 02125 072108Z

AT THEIR REQUEST.

2. THESE AMERICANS CLAIMED THAT CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE WAS BROUGHT TO BEAR ON DELEGATES TO THE CHURCH'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY WHICH MET IN TAINAN IN LATE MARCH. THE AUTHORITIES INSISTED ON RECEIVING A DOZEN OR SO PASSES TO THE MEETING TO ENABLE THEM TO MONITOR THE MEETING AND

REPORT ON INDIVIDUAL STANDS TAKEN DURING PROCEEDINGS. THE CHURCH SOUGHT TO LIMIT THEIR INTIMIDATING INFLUENCE BY INSTITUTING A SECRET BALLOT FOR BOTH THE ELECTION OF GENERAL SECRETARY AND REAFFIRMATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION. (THE AMERICAN OBSERVERS REPORTED THAT KAO WAS RE-ELECTED AS SECRETARY GENERAL BY A MARGIN OF 255 TO 49 WITH EIGHT ABSTENTIONS AND THAT THE DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WAS REAFFIRMED BY A MARGIN OF 235 TO 49 WITH EIGHT ABSTENTIONS AND SEVERAL BLANK BALLOTS.) IN ADDITION, THE AMERICAN OBSERVERS THOUGHT THERE WAS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE RUMOR THAT ABOUT 50 DELEGATES WHO WERE INVITED BY THE GROCK/KMT TO A MEETING ON THE EVE OF THE VOTING WERE EACH GIVEN NT DOLS 1,000 TO VOTE AGAINST KAO AND THE DECLARATION, AND WERE PROMISED NT DOLS 50,000 APIECE IF KAO AND THE DECLARATION WERE REPUDIATED.

3. THE AMERICAN OBSERVERS WERE GENERALLY IMPRESSED BY THE UNITY DISPLAYED BY THE CHURCH IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE. ALTHOUGH THE AUTHORITIES HAD TRIED PARTICULARLY HARD TO INFLUENCE THE DELEGATES FROM THE MOUNTAIN AREAS (WHERE GOVERNMENT CONTROL IS STRONG) AND TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE TRADITIONAL SPLIT BETWEEN THE FOUR NORTHERN AND THE 11 SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIES, THESE EFFORTS FAILED. SUPPORT FOR KAO AND THE DECLARATION WAS GENERAL AND DID NOT VARY BY REGION. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS GENERAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TAIPEI 02125 072108Z

PLEASURE AT THE OUTCOME OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING, THE CHURCH LEADERSHIP EXPRESSLY DISCOURAGED ANY OVERT CELEBRATION OF VICTORY AND WENT OUT OF ITS WAY TO AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF THUMBING ITS NOSE AT THE ESTABLISHMENT.

4. THE CHURCHMEN REPORTED WIDESPREAD CONCERN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE ITS EFFORTS TO FORCE THE CHURCH OUT OF POLITICALLY CONTROVERSIAL AREAS. IN PARTICULAR, MANY DELEGATES TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY EXPECTED THAT INDIVIDUAL PRESBYTERIANS WOULD FIND IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN LICENSES, ETC., FOR THEIR PRIVATE BUSINESSES, AND THAT THE CONVOCATION OF COMPULSORY EASTER SUNDAY TOWN MEETINGS IN TEN MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES AT PRECISELY THE TIME OF EASTER SERVICES THIS YEAR WAS A WARNING THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD MOVE AGAINST THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH AS WELL.

5. THE AMERICAN OBSERVERS EXPRESSED THANKS TO THE EMBASSY FOR ITS CONCERN FOR THE CHURCH'S CURRENT DIFFICULTIES. EMBASSY OFFICER REPLIED THAT OUR INTEREST IN SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WAS A MATTER OF LONG STANDING RECORD, AS

WAS OUR INTEREST IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECT OF LOCAL  
POLITICS. NEVERTHELESS, THE EMBASSY TRIED TO MAKE IT  
CLEAR THAT WHILE WE HOPED OUR OPEN CONTACTS WITH NON-KMT  
GROUPS WOULD SERVE TO INCREASE GROC RESPECT FOR CIVIL  
LIBERTIES, WE WERE NOT IN A POSITION TO PROTECT  
INDIVIDUALS SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT DECIDE TO TAKE MORE  
FORCEFUL ACTION. THE AMERICAN CHURCHMEN CLAIMED THAT  
THIS WAS WELL UNDERSTOOD BY THE LOCAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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